

Hawaii Island Dengue Fever Unified Command

Update on Response Activities as of Dec. 2, 2015

The Unified Command under the leadership of incident commander Darryl Oliviera, Administrator of the Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency, is directing the response activities on the Big Island of Hawaii for the dengue fever outbreak. Partners in this effort are providing support under the unified command and include Department of Health (DOH) and the office of Governor David Ige. County partners are Civil Defense, Fire, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, and the Office of Mayor Billy Kenoi.

Since the beginning of this outbreak, DOH has been in constant contact with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), whose role is to provide technical expertise and advice. At the request of the State and County, Dr. Lyle Petersen, director of the CDC Division of Vector-Borne Diseases, is on Hawaii Island this week to assess efforts and share his analysis with officials. In addition to Dr. Petersen, a CDC entomologist and technician are providing consultation and assistance on mosquito surveillance strategies to DOH.

Outbreak Investigation:

DOH State Laboratories Division has been receiving dengue fever samples and completing testing routinely within 24 hours Monday through Friday. All confirmed cases to date have recovered or are recovering. In addition to the confirmed cases to date, more than 300 suspect cases have been excluded based on the work of DOH disease investigators and/or negative test results.

Vector Control:

DOH Vector Control has performed more than 100 property assessments and is taking precautionary action by spraying at case residences and other areas that have been specifically identified by the investigation as potential areas of concern. To date, more than 200 mosquito abatement sprayings have been conducted since the beginning of the outbreak.

DOH environmental staff has been supplemented by County Parks & Recreation and Public Works, as well as State Highways crews. This week, additional state staff will be trained to further supplement those crews.

Hawaii County Civil Defense is taking complaints of possible mosquito habitats on public property, or on neighboring property when contact cannot be made with the property owner. Teams consisting of County, Community Emergency Response Teams, and DOH personnel will investigate complaints and identify appropriate corrective action. To date, more than 50 complaints have been received and are being addressed.

Education, Information and Outreach:

An upcoming community meeting presented by Hawaii County and DOH will be held on Thursday, Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Pahoa High School Cafeteria

Hawaii County radio messages are running regularly on Hawaii Island radio stations, as well as Maui radio stations that reach certain areas of Hawaii Island. Ongoing updates, additions and revisions are being made regularly to Hawaii County and DOH websites and social media channels.

Multidisciplinary outreach teams are on the ground reaching out to vulnerable populations such as the homeless and immigrants. Teams include Hawaii Fire Department Emergency Medical Services and social services personnel. The objective of the teams is to coordinate access to healthcare, education on prevention measures, and gathering suspect case data.

Fight the Bite and other informational materials are being disseminated in the community at meetings, public facilities, visitor industry facilities, through community organizations and more. Interested parties are encouraged to visit DOH's website to download and share materials (<http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/dengue-outbreak-2015/>).

